



November 13, 2024  
Early season reminders

The 2024-25 wrestling season starts this week and I'm sure everyone is as excited as I am for it. The following includes some key reminders as well as a few clarifications on new rule changes.

### **Wrestlers Uniforms:**

#### **Female wrestlers:**

Per NFHS rule 4-1-1a & c along with rule 4-5-7 all female wrestlers are required to wear a sports bra that covers their breasts and minimizes risk of exposure as part of the legal uniform requirements for both weigh-ins and competition.

Coaches, this is an area of opportunity for us to focus on as each year we have several female wrestlers that do not conform to the sports bra requirement. Rather some wear a traditional bra or some other type of non-conforming bra. Non-compliance to this uniform requirement can result in match stoppage, use of injury time out and possible disqualification from a match if not corrected within the injury time out time allotment.

### **Wrestlers' Appearance & Health:**

#### **Hair:**

The NFHS removed the former "hair" rule a few years ago. There is no longer a rule limiting the length of a wrestler's hair and wrestlers are not required to wear a legal hair cover. A wrestler may choose to wear a hair cover (NFHS rule 4-2-1). In addition, please refer to the NFHS Case Book, 4.2.1 situations a, b & c for further guidance.

#### **Skin Conditions:**

Friendly reminder that the UIL only recognizes the "NFHS Medical Release Form" for any wrestler with a suspected skin condition. This form does require a signature from a medical provider, date of examination, area(s) of the body impacted and return to competition date to be completed. This form can be found on the UIL Wrestling website:

[https://www.uiltexas.org/files/athletics/2021-22 NFHS Wrestling Skin Lesion Form - FINAL 1-April 2021.pdf](https://www.uiltexas.org/files/athletics/2021-22%20NFHS%20Wrestling%20Skin%20Lesion%20Form%20-%20FINAL%201-April%202021.pdf)

This medical release form should be presented at weigh-ins and maintained during all competition.



### **Braces:**

NFHS rule 4-2-6. "Each contestant who has braces or has a special orthodontic device on the teeth, shall be required to wear a tooth and mouth protector. A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and cover the teeth and all areas of the braces or special orthodontic device with adequate thickness. This would include upper and lower teeth if devices are present on both."

Guidance on this:

The tooth and mouth protector cannot protrude outside of the contestants' mouth (intraoral).

All contestants that wear braces should bring their tooth and mouth protector device with them to weigh-ins and shall wear them in all competitions.

If there are any questions regarding the legality of this equipment, please contact your local TWA chapter or state rules interpreter or the UIL State Rules Interpreter for an official ruling.

### **Special Equipment:**

NFHS rule 4-2-1 and 4-3-1 a & b. Wrestlers should bring their special equipment with them to weigh-ins. This will allow the head official to review and approve the special equipment prior to the contestant stepping on the mat to compete. Wrestlers do not have to weigh in with their special equipment, however, they should present this to the officials at weigh-ins.

### **Headgear:**

NFHS Case Book, 4.3.1 situation D: School logo or mascot stickers are allowed to be placed on the ear guards of a wrestler's headgear. Commemorative stickers may be allowed IF approved by the UIL. All other stickers are illegal.

### **Weight Classifications and Weigh Ins:**

NFHS rule 4-4-4: "A 2-pound growth allowance may be added to each weight class any time after the date of certification." The UIL defines the "date of certification" as December 27, 2024. Wrestlers shall make their scratch weight prior to the date of certification.

NFHS rule 4-5-5-Consecutive days of team competition: "When there are consecutive days of team competition, there shall be a 1-pound additional allowance granted each day for all wrestlers up to a maximum of two pounds. In order to be granted this 1-pound additional allowance a minimum of 48 hours advance notice is required for the opponent(s). The acceptable person(s) to receive that notice shall be the head coach, principal or athletic director."

Guidance on the advance notice requirement is to provide written notification to the respective parties with the appropriate minimum of 48 hours of advance notice required.



### **Fall, Near Fall & Technical Fall:**

**Technical Fall situations:** New rule change-rule 5-11-4a: "If a takedown or reversal straight to near-fall criteria creates a 15-point advantage, the match shall continue until the near-fall criteria is no longer met. Conclusion of the near-fall criteria is immediate."

**Non-technical fall near fall situations;** NFHS rule 5-11-2c: "A near fall is ended when the defensive wrestlers gets out of a pinning situation. The referee must not signal the score for a near fall until the situation is ended and only one near fall shall be scored in each pinning situation, regardless of number of times the offensive wrestler places an opponent in the near fall position during the pinning situation."

\*There is a material difference in how officials are to call near falls in the technical fall and non-technical fall situations as outlined by the NFHS. It is imperative that officials and coaches understand the difference of these two situations.

If the offensive wrestler commits an illegal hold, unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct after the offensive wrestler has earned the technical fall the point(s) for these actions is a post-match penalty per the NFHS.

### **Inbounds:**

New rule change, NFHS rule 5-15-1, 2 & 3: "Contestants are considered to be inbounds if one point of contact of either wrestler is inside or on the boundary line." Points of contact are defined by the NFHS as parts of the body of either wrestler touching the wrestling area which may or may not be weight bearing and include the following:

Knee(s)  
Side of the thigh  
Buttocks  
Hand(s)  
Head  
Foot (feet)  
Finger(s)  
Toe(s)

This is the single most impactful rule change by the NFHS in many years and will allow wrestling action and scoring to take place on the out of bounds area. It also provides some much-needed simplicity to officials, coaches, wrestlers and fans in the near fall/fall situations on or near the out of bounds line. Referees should be patient and allow action to continue on the out of bounds line and only call the wrestlers out of bounds when the wrestlers are completely out of bounds.



**Illegal Holds:**

NFHS rule 7-1-5n and x: Officials, please make sure we understand, recognize and call when appropriate the illegal cutback and rear-standing, double-knee kickback situations. We've seen an increase of both illegal cutbacks and rear-standing, double-knee kickbacks in the past few years. Both are illegal and can cause serious injury to the wrestlers. Please refer to NFHS rules book page 77, illustration 88 for the illegal rear-standing, double knee kickback play pic.

**Stalling:**

NFHS rule 5-25-6d: "has shoelaces that become untied or has a shoe come off" during the match.

Officials-please utilize the traditional stalling calls when applicable in the neutral position. We tend to forget about traditional stalling and focus more on the neutral out of bounds stalling situations. Both should be used consistently.

**Overtime:**

NFHS Case Book 6-7, page 86-Ultimate tiebreaker and stalling. I wanted to specifically cover a unique situation regarding stalling by the top wrestler in the ultimate tiebreaker. The NFHS has historically covered this exact situation, however, over the past few years this language was removed. In the UTB if the top wrestler creates a stalling situation the referee shall call a stalemate on the first occurrence. If the top wrestler creates a second stalling situation in the UTB the referee shall call the top wrestler for stalling. This has been confirmed with the NFHS.

Have a great season and best of luck to all our wrestlers, coaches and officials!

Sincerely,

Dan Lang  
UIL State Wrestling Rules Interpreter